

The Republican.

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BICKERINGS OF THE BIBLE MEN.

THE falling out among these Bible-Taxers of the weaker and more credulous part of the public leads to the question—Would they so disagree, in the object of circulating the Bible, if all were directed by one influence, an influence, such as they pretend their divine influence to be, free from all jarring interests? Were their Jehovah on Mount Sinai, uttering his ten commandments, amidst peals of thunder, superior to his brother thunderer, Jupiter, on Mount Olympus, these disagreements would not happen; for he, who can choose instruments and guide them, would not choose such instruments as should obstruct the actions of each other. When the writer of the ten commandments said or made Jehovah say, “Thou shalt have no other Gods but me,” he meant to say to those over whom he had influence, “Thou shalt not pay homage to that God on Mount Olympus, to that Moloch of Carthage and Tyre, to that Bel of Persia, or to that Osiris of Egypt. The name of your God shall be Jehovah, and his dwelling-place shall be Mount Sinai.” Heaven and Hell had not then been invented as godly residences. We are not told that Jehovah came down from Heaven to Mount Sinai; but that he dwelt there. The ten commandments neither promise Heaven nor threaten Hell beyond this life. All punishments for neglects or offences were to consist of the vengeance of jealousy, a loss of favour, or a little fury that might proceed so far as a blow or a scratched face. Certain acts are forbidden; but no penalties enacted if committed. When Jehovah is made to say, “For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments”—the application is human in its character, and applies entirely to a species of favouritism. It expresses, “if thou lovest Jupiter, my rival mountain God, and hatest me, I will hate and annoy thee.” This is the only punishment denounced in the ten paltry commandments. Their first principle is jealousy of other Gods, a species of sectarianism that

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has been co-existent with religion, and the three first of the ten are confined to an expression of this jealousy. This jealousy was precisely of the same character as that which now pervades the Bible Men. Indeed, jealousy and hatred among mankind have found their mainspring in religion.

The present immediate dispute among the Biblers is called the "Apocrypha Controversy," just as if every historical book in the Bible were not Apocryphal. Every particle of historical matter in the Bible, including Old and New Testament and the Apocryphal books, is alike Apocryphal. If a probability of historical correctness attaches to any of them, it is to the books which are called Apocryphal. The whole controversy between the Biblers and Infidels is, in fact, the "APOCRYPHA CONTROVERSY."

The scene at the Freemason's Tavern on Friday last was ludicrous in the extreme, and I shall close this week's notice of the dispute among the Biblers, by copying the report of the proceedings from the "Morning Herald."

R. C.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

A MEETING of this Society was held yesterday at the Freemasons' Tavern. It was convened by the Rev. Mr. Williams, for the purpose of making charges against the Committee, and giving them an opportunity of answering them. The room was crowded.

Soon after twelve, the appointed hour, the cry of "Chair, chair!" commenced, and the Rev. Mr. Williams, in a few minutes, made his appearance, with a large bluish bag under one arm and a pile of books under the other.

Rev. Mr. WILLIAMS—I propose that the Rev. Mr. Mutter do take the chair. Will any body second it?

The Rev. Mr. MUTTER—I beg to decline taking the chair.

The Rev. Mr. COX was then proposed and seconded. It was the unanimous opinion of the meeting that he be called to the chair.

The Rev. Mr. Cox having taken the chair, said, that he was unexpectedly called upon to occupy the chair of so respectable a meeting. He came there solely and simply to hear the proceedings, and to act according to the impression they made upon his mind. If he submitted to take the chair, it was because he saw many gentlemen of the highest respectability present, who knew how to act: and if they acted promptly and directly, they would at once set the thing at rest, and tranquillize the public mind.—(Applause.)

Rev. Mr. BLACKBURN said that, having last night learned, from the Monthly Extracts of the Society, that misrepresentations had gone abroad against them, to which they would offer explanations, and it being the law of England that no man should be condemned before he was heard, he thought the Committee ought to be first heard, and he would therefore move an adjournment. This he did chiefly on the ground that the Committee were now preparing an explanation, which he had no doubt would give general satisfaction.—(Loud applause.)

Captain FLEMING.—I beg leave to second that motion.

The Rev. Mr. CROSBIE (an Irish gentleman) claimed the attention of the Meeting for a few moments, as one disinterested in the result of these proceedings. As a humble and officiating member of the Established Church, he must say, that at a time when the Church of England was assailed by Unitarian and Socinian heresy, the intimation of adjournment given by the Rev. Gentleman who preceded him, if that gentleman be in holy orders, was not one, which, considering the number of years the Society was established, would give satisfaction to the public. A Society so long established should be prepared to meet all charges at a moment's warning, and at once satisfy a Christian public. He would be ready, whenever the subject was fairly brought forward, to prove that faith had been violated by this Society with the public, both in England and Ireland—(The Rev. Gentleman was prevented from proceeding for a few minutes by hissing and clamour.)

Rev. Mr. WILLIAMS—I will prove it too.—(Hissing.)

The CHAIRMAN.—This is a subject which ought to be discussed with the utmost tranquillity. It relates to the Bible, and our proceedings ought to be conducted in the spirit of that Holy Book.

The Rev. Mr. CROSBIE resumed.—After expressing his obligation to the Chairman for his interference to procure him a hearing, he begged it not to be understood that, because he found fault with the conduct of the British and Foreign Bible Society, he opposed the distribution of the Bible. Though a young man, he had suffered many afflictions. He had seen some of his nearest relatives and dearest friends descend to the grave, and were it not for the divine truths contained in that inestimable book, he would be the most miserable of men—(Applause.) But there were societies enough, where every loyal and true member of the Established Church could obtain a Bible without having recourse to the British and Foreign Bible Society—(Hisses). He well knew, that because this Meeting was got up by an individual, many persons were unwilling to hear any thing against the Society; but the time must come when error and prejudice being removed,

Nebula erroris remota,

they would be more indulgent in granting him a hearing. As a proof that he was not an enemy to the Bible, he supported the Church Missionary Society—(Hissing and clamour).

CHAIRMAN.—Every Gentleman has a right to be heard, and I request no Gentleman will interrupt the speaker. It is competent to any body to answer him after he has spoken.

The Rev. Mr. CROSBIE continued.—As he had been so often interrupted, he would only repeat that the British and Foreign Society were wrong in not coming forward and refuting the charges brought against them by the Rev. Mr. M'Neil and Mr. Drummond, at Guildford. He did say, that so influential and powerful body as this Society, with their host of clerks, secretaries, stationers, &c. living in affluence and retirement, ought to be able to resist the attacks of any individual, without delay, and without begging time to prepare a report. He was not one of those who would shrink from his duty as a clergyman of the Established Church, when the proper time came. He knew that Church of England clergymen were blamed for not being in more constant communication with their flocks. But he also knew, that when clergymen did come forward to do their duty, their flocks did not always stand by them. He had no communication whatever with Mr. Williams, but let the Meeting, even in justice to itself, grant him a patient hearing, and the Society would have

an opportunity of refuting his charges at another meeting. He protested against any individual, who claimed to be a Christian and a gentleman, attempting to put down fair discussion by hissing and hooting. Nor ought charges, when offered to be substantiated by proof, to be cushioned by adjournment. It was the bounden duty of every person present to grant Mr. Williams a safe, sound, and lawful hearing. If they did not, he had no hesitation in saying they would disgrace themselves. He again repeated that he was not opposed to the distribution of the Bible, but he was on British ground, and when he saw an individual who had charges to make against a public body, attempted to be put down by adjournment—that they who ought always to be ready to account for their conduct might have time to prepare a report, he could not help expressing his surprise. In conclusion, the Rev. Gentleman begged the Chairman to accept his thanks for his polite and courteous conduct towards him, and apologized to the Meeting if, in the warmth of the moment, he made use of any offensive language to them.

The Rev. Mr. WILLIAMS then rose to state his charges, but almost at the outset alluded to a report in the public press of his having prosecuted a poor man under the Game Laws. (Hissing, and “what have the Game Laws to do with the question?” “Chair, chair.”)

CHAIRMAN—If the Rev. Gentleman will speak to the question, he will be heard, but he cannot go into a long detail of irrelevant matter.

Mr. WILLIAMS—I have three propositions to state against the Society, which I can prove to the conviction of every impartial man. I speak in one language, and think in another. [The Rev. Gent. is a Welchman.] You speak and think in one; but truth is easily understood. The charges are these—first, that the British and Foreign Bible Society departed from the line of conduct prescribed by their own rules. Secondly, that the conduct of the Society has been different from that which it stipulated with the public to pursue; and thirdly, that it was conducted now in a different manner from what it had been in the first years of its existence. I am well acquainted with the organ of the Society—

A Gentleman here got up and said the question of adjournment should be first disposed of.

The CHAIRMAN agreed that the question of adjournment should be first disposed of, and if it should be negatived, Mr. Williams would then have an opportunity of addressing the Meeting.

The Rev. Mr. CROSBIE rose amid cries of “spoke, spoke,” “Order, order.”

The Rev. Mr. WILLIAMS—I will move for an amendment, and if not carried the Society will disgrace itself.

Rev. Mr. CROSBIE—I ask if there be any person present to represent the Bible Society? If there be any accredited agent in the room?—[No, no.]

A GENTLEMAN—And for this reason, no one knew who called the Meeting.

The Rev. Mr. WILLIAMS—I have taken the room for the day, and you will disgrace yourselves if you do not hear me.

Rev. Mr. CROSBIE—I am sorry that Mr. Williams has used such language to so respectable a Meeting; but if you now adjourn without hearing him, you will make out a *prima facie* case against the Society. If the original motion be not withdrawn I will move an amendment.

A GENTLEMAN rose to order, and said that an amendment upon the question of adjournment was quite irregular. But he loved the Bible Society so well, that if there were one whisper against it, he begged in Christian kindness that Mr. Williams would be heard.

Mr. JONES—Mr. Williams says the Meeting would disgrace itself if it did not hear him; but he was sorry to say that if he were heard, he would bring more disgrace on himself.—[Applause.]

The Rev. Mr. CROSBIE—The adjournment may be proposed at any stage of the proceedings, and if you continue to increase the agitation of Mr. Williams by opposition, you will render his statement less clear and accurate. Any body who

does not choose to hear him may retire. I will move as an amendment that Mr. Williams be heard.

A Gentleman said that no amendment could be made upon an adjournment.

The Rev. Mr. WILLIAMS—I offered 5s. a minute to be heard. Those who choose may go away. Speak I will, if there be but two to hear me.

Mr. NOBLE—Though I am always unwilling to speak, and willing to hear, I cannot avoid saying a few words upon the question of adjournment. In the Bible Society there are men of exalted piety and unbounded benevolence, against whom charges have been made. To these men it would be but justice to give time to defend themselves.—He had no doubt the Committee were strong in their integrity, and that they had not departed from the fundamental principles of the Society. Men of this kind, when attacks were made upon them, ought to have the opportunity of a fair hearing—

A Gentleman rose to order, when a scene of confusion, and disorder followed, for some minutes; vehement cries of “Question, question.” When quiet was restored.

The CHAIRMAN said, the placard circulated in the streets calling the Meeting was not signed, and therefore the individuals composing this Meeting were perfectly independent of each other; but, as the friends of the Christian religion and of truth, they ought to give every man a hearing.

Mr. WILLIAMS—How can my charges be answered if they are not heard?

The Rev. Mr. CUMMING, of Cork, rose and said, that before the question of adjournment was put he wished to make a few remarks. He came forward under considerable agitation, having never before addressed a meeting in this great capital, and therefore claimed their indulgence; but he could not refrain from rising on this occasion, because, however narrow this question may seem to some, he looked upon it as one full of importance. When he saw a reverend gentleman, who had more than once appealed to the Meeting, say if the Bible Society did not wish to cushion the question by adjournment—but whether this was so or not, signified nothing, the Society would come forward and obtain a hearing—when he saw this gentleman state, and let this broad fact go abroad to the public, that a divine, a member of the Church of England—and he trembled when he heard him—opposed the circulation of the Bible at a public meeting—that book which belonged to all nations, and to all churches, to which, when handed down to us from its original source, nothing was added in the length or breath by way of comment; as the church presented it to them, so it was presented to the people, and were they to prevent its circulation because it was not accompanied with note or comment? Oh! from the bottom of his heart did he wish that such a sentiment was blotted out from the memory of him who uttered it and of all who heard it.—[Loud applause]. Blame the individual who gave it utterance, and not the Church to which he belonged.

Rev. Mr. CROSBIE rose, amid cries of “Chair, chair” and “Spoke, spoke,” but was allowed to proceed, after a few minutes. He assured them that the grave, temperate, and polite speech of the reverend gentleman, would not have the effect of blotting out from his memory any thing that he had said. He stated decidedly that no man was a warmer advocate of the Bible, and he looked upon it as the imperative, sacred, and bounden duty of every clergyman to go about and see that none of his flock wanted a Bible—[Cries of—This is not explaining.] I am explaining. If, in the distribution of the Bible, I disapprove of the means, in which I am supported by nine-tenths of the dignitaries of the church, I do humbly say that I am not resisting the progress of the Bible.

Rev. Mr. CUMMING disclaimed any intention of hurting the personal feelings of the reverend gentleman.

A Gentleman said the Bible Society would best prove their sincerity by hearing Mr. Williams. He, therefore, hoped the question of adjournment would not be carried.

Rev. Mr. CUMMING—Under the sanction of the Chairman, who cannot make the proposition himself, I propose that the charges against the Society be heard. — [No, no.]

The CHAIRMAN disclaimed having given the Reverend gentleman any such sanction. He was not correct in his statement of his [The Chairman's] opinion.

A Rev. Gentleman, whose name we could not learn, recommended the adoption of the motion for adjournment on grounds distinct from any that had been yet offered. They all seemed convinced that the Bible Society had nothing to fear from a full examination of their conduct. If, therefore, he wished the meeting to adjourn, it was not because he was afraid of the result of an inquiry, but because the mode of trying the merits or demerits of the Society was inexpedient. The fair way of appealing to public opinion, was through the press, which was open to every body. Through this channel an appeal was made to the understanding.—

MR. WILLIAMS.—Yes, but you must have money,—[Order, order, chair, chair.]—

The Gentleman who was interrupted, continued.—The whole subject would then be exposed to the cool and dispassionate consideration of all who read it, and at a comparatively small expense. But the mode now adopted was not so much an address to the understanding as to the feelings; nor could it be expected that the Bible Society could be prepared at the instant to answer the charges that might be brought against them. [Mr. Williams—How at the instant, when they have had notice of the charges?] Leaving out of the question whether they were right or wrong, he thought the present an unfair and inexpedient mode of trying their conduct, and therefore hoped the Meeting would adjourn.

The Rev. MR. WILLIAMS begged to say a few words, but was obliged to sit down amid cries of “spoke, spoke,” and “order, order.”

MR. RICHMAN supported the adjournment, on the ground of it being probable that many, like himself, had heard nothing of the meeting till this morning. He did not fear discussion, for the more the Society was examined the better. It would come out of the fire unsullied. But this was neither the proper time or place for the inquiry. Mr. Williams would lose nothing by delay: he would rather gain.

MR. JONES rose, amid cries of “name, and who are you?” I am a fellow-countryman of Mr. Williams.—[A laugh.] It was remarked by somebody that Mr. Williams was in a state of irritation, and if he continued so he was afraid it would go abroad that Welchmen were too hot in their tempers. He would, therefore, do himself and the Institution more credit if he deferred his charges to a time when they could be discussed with more coolness and deliberation than they could be discussed now.

MR. WILLIAMS.—Where are my books that were on the table? Don't take away my property. I gave two month's notice of these charges—they can't complain on that head.

The Rev. MR. MUTTER was sorry that all this discussion had unnecessarily taken place; for, if Mr. Williams had been heard at the beginning, it would have been all over now. If this Meeting adjourn, it will leave the impression that the Society were not able to meet the charges.—[Hissing.] It was not very honourable in that body of gentlemen in the corner, who came from the Bible Society, to attempt to put down discussion by hissing.—[Great uproar and confusion, and continued hissing for some minutes.] As soon as order was restored,

The CHAIRMAN rose—I hope gentleman will speak without indulging in personalities.

The Rev. MR. MUTTER resumed—He equally disapproved of the spirit of Mr. Williams and of the counter-spirit of the other party. He wished they had chosen between both, and showed more of the Christian spirit.—Let them hear Mr. Williams for five minutes, and then decide whether it would be expedient to hear him further.

The Rev. MR. BLACKBURNE, who had been sitting in the corner alluded to, said, though he had been residing in the metropolis four years, he had been but once in the committee-room; and on the subject that engaged their attention to-day he had not communicated with any person. He hoped the good sense of the Meeting would support the question of adjournment.

The question was then put and carried, with few exceptions.

The thanks of the Meeting were returned to the Rev. Mr. Cox, for his very proper conduct in the chair.

The Reverend Mr. Cox hoped that the Bible Society would give an explanation, at the proper time, satisfactory to the Meeting, and creditable to themselves.

The Chairman and several gentleman then left the room, but many remained. There were a few decent females present, some of whom remained.

MR. WILLIAMS.—Those who wish to hear the truth will remain. Let no one take away my property with him. The truth, and nothing but the truth—the truth will be known. My moderation shall be known to all men.

Somebody asked him by whom the Meeting was called?

He said by himself; and that he had also the authority of the Rev. Mr. Mutter, who had promised to take the Chair. He had his approbation of the propriety of calling a Meeting in his own hand-writing.

A cry of "Produce, produce!"

MR. WILLIAMS then pulled a paper out of his pocket, which he said was written by Mr. Mutter.

A Gentleman asked who knew Mr. Mutter's hand-writing—can any body identify his writing?

A Gentleman said he could, and asked for the paper.

MR. WILLIAMS.—No, I won't let it out of my possession.

[Mr. Williams and this gentleman then met half way, and Mr. Williams, holding the paper with a tenacious grasp, allowed him to look at it.]

This Gentleman said he did not believe it was the hand-writing of the Rev. Mr. Mutter.

The Rev. MR. MUTTER, who then made his appearance, admitted that this was his hand-writing. Mr. Williams called upon him with the copy of a handbill, which contained so much folly and absurdity, that he corrected it, and this paper was the correction which he wrote himself.

MR. BUCK complained of the insinuation thrown out against Mr. Williams, that he forged this paper. No man could be guilty of such depravity at a public Meeting.

A person here observed—Oh, you are the printer of one of the handbills.

MR. BUCK.—I am.

MR. WILLIAMS had by this time mounted the table, and was proceeding from one end to the other, with violent gesticulation, repeating the following verses from the Bible:

33. He shall be shaven, but the scall shall he not shave; and the priest shall shut him up that hath the scall seven days more.

34. And in the seventh day the priest shall look on the scall: and, behold, if the scall be not spread in the skin, nor be in sight deeper than the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him clean: and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean.

35. But if the scall spread much in the skin after his cleansing.

36. Then the priest shall look on him; and, behold, if the scall be spread in the skin, the priest shall not seek for yellow hair; he is unclean.

37. But if the scall be in his sight at a stay, and that there is black hair grown up therein, the scall is healed, he is clean: and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

38. If a man also or a woman have in the skin of their flesh bright spots, even white bright spots;

39. Then the priest shall look: and, behold, if the bright spots in the skin of their flesh be darkish white; it is a freckled spot that groweth in the skin; he is clean.

40. And the man whose hair is fallen off his head, he is bald; yet he is clean.

41. And he that hath his hair fallen off from the part of his head towards his face, he is forehead bald: yet is he clean.

42. And if there be in the bald head, or bald forehead, a white reddish sore ; it is a leprosy sprung up in his bald head, or his bald forehead.

43. Then the priest shall look upon it : and, behold, if the rising of the sore be white reddish in his bald head, or in his bald forehead, as the leprosy appeareth in the skin of the flesh ;

44. He is a leprous man, he is unclean : the priest shall pronounce him utterly unclean ; his plague is in his head.

45. And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean. unclean.

This is what I want to do with the Bible Society. I have been watching them 13 years, and I now want to put in a new Committee, that the old Committee may go out, and take the plague with them, for the plague is in this Society.

Here a little old man scrambled upon the table, and pulling Mr. Williams by the skirt of the coat, turned round to the Meeting, and in the most persuasive manner, placing the forefinger of the right hand upon the palm of the left at every word spoke as follows.—“ Gentlemen, I think, and I know that you will think, that an honest man ought to be as exact in paying a farthing as a pound. Now, I borrowed a newspaper from my barber—[excessive laughter]—and I lent it to Mr. Williams, who never returned it to me. This is not fair dealing, and you will say he ought to return it to me.”

MR. WILLIAMS—Yes: but I am quits with you, for I lent the same barber a newspaper this morning, which he did not return.—[Continued laughter.]

“ Oh !” said a voice, “ you are Mr. Jacques, the printer of some of the hand-bills.”

The Rev. Mr. CROSBIE, who had remained behind to hear what Mr. Williams had to say, requested him to give the subject up now, and defer it to another time.

Mr. WILLIAMS still continued on the table, and had some pamphlets, which he offered for sale. In bargain with one person, he said take them for four shillings—[pause]—have them for three—well, take them for half. They would not be taken. Several persons then exclaimed, “ Oh, here is a sale ;” said one, “ I bid threepence :” another, “ I’ll give sixpence ;” a third, “ I’ll have them for ninepence.” “ Oh, no,” said Mr. Williams, “ you’ll not cheapen me that way.”

This farce continued for some time, till dinner hour approaching, and Mr. Williams showing no disposition to retire, many said they would order dinner at his expense.

A gentleman said, in a serious tone, “ Mr. Williams, you had better go to the High Bailiff of Westminster, or the Lord Mayor, and request them to call a meeting next week, where your charges will be fairly and patiently heard.”

Mr. WILLIAMS being asked what he had in his bag, said, “ I will show you.” He then took it up from between his legs, and slowly placing it on the table, squeezed up with great gravity a green bag, sealed with a stick of red sealing-wax at the mouth.—[Much laughter, and cries of “ Oh, there goes the green bag.”] This he held up to the view of the Meeting, exclaiming, “ This is another green bag—here are the charges—this is the truth—this is the specific which they fear.”

A lady came up to Mr. Williams and whispered to him, which occasioned some tittering, till it was ascertained that she was his wife, who, we suppose, mortified at the exhibition, entreated him to retire. He soon after withdrew, and the Meeting separated.

The charges which he intended to make against the Society are, a misapplication of funds, and the employment of Socinian and Arian agents on the Continent, who circulated the Bible with comments to enforce their own religious principles.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE REPUBLICAN."

SIR,

ACCEPT my thanks for your ready notice of the typographical errors in my last, and permit me to resume the subject.

I say, then, that if in one hundred and nineteen years these fifteen hundred people could increase to that formidable population which held the conqueror of the world at bay, and in another hundred years (A. D. 61) could leave eighty thousand men dead upon the field, besides an infinite number of prisoners in the hands of Suetonius,* our forefathers must certainly have been as clever at making *men* as we are at making *calicoes*.

F. P. says that, "in time"—that is, in twenty-five years, according to his Malthusean ratio—the people of this country will double their present number: and adds "why then were there not thirty millions of people in this country two thousand years ago?" And I say too, why were there not? One supposition is quite as probable as the other; nay, I think those who consult Cæsar, Diodorus, and Tacitus, will be inclined to decide in favour of the latter.

And admitting that "in the United States of North America, the number of people has been doubled six times in less than 150 years;" what does it prove? That such is the natural course and increase of population? Ridiculous: every political economist, and almost every old woman in the kingdom, knows that that extensive, fertile, and comparatively well-governed country, has been continually receiving a great influx of new inhabitants from other parts of the world. Has this circumstance escaped F. P.'s observation? or did it appear to militate too strongly against a long-cherished and darling theory?

Then there are the aboriginal inhabitants of North America; how many once-numerous and powerful tribes and nations have been civilized into nothingness by gin and gunpowder and missionary societies? These things cannot be *forgotten*, nor ought they to be *concealed* by political writers.

But with respect to the population of this country, perhaps F. P. may say, "is it fair thus to take advantage of my random expression of 'one in ten thousand?'" I answer yes, perfectly fair, against one who professes to come armed *cap-a-pié* to the contest: but I will content myself with entering my protest against such random shots from the tubes of serious politicians, and proceed to examine the gentleman's deliberate and formal calculation.

"Let us suppose, then," says he, "that a thousand years ago

* Tacit. Ann. lib. 14.

the number of people in Great Britain was one million, and that *they double their number every twenty-five years*, the account would stand thus :

In the year 825 . . .	1,000,000 persons
850 . . .	2,000,000
875 . . .	4,000,000
900 . . .	8,000,000
925 . . .	16,000,000
950 . . .	32,000,000
975 . . .	64,000,000
1000 . . .	128,000,000
1025 . . .	256,000,000

"Here we see," continues F. P., "that at the end of two hundred years the number of people would be 256 millions, and if any one will take the trouble to carry out the table to the year 1825, he will find the number to be 1,099,511,627,776,000,000!" that is, one trillion, ninety-nine thousand five hundred and eleven billions, six hundred and twenty-seven thousand seven hundred and seventy-six millions! or 336,550 persons to every square foot of ground in England, Scotland, and Wales!! Truly a very goodly population. No wonder as F. P. says, "*they eat up one another*;" I am surprized that they have not ere this eat—

— "The great globe itself,
Yea all which it inhabit—
And like the baseless fabric of a vision
Left not a wreck behind."

But, we will admit this ratio of doubling every twenty-five years; and examine the matter retrospectively. We have now fifteen millions of people in Great Britain; very well, then there were—

In 1800 only	7,500,000
1775	3,750,000
1750	1,875,000
1725	937,500
1700	468,750
1675	234,375
1650	117,187 and a fraction.
1625	58,593
1600	29,296
1575	14,648
1550	7,324
1525	3,662
1500	1,831
1475	915
and in 1450 only	457 persons, and a fraction.

It is thus as plain as *modern* political arithmetic can make it, that our Sovereign Lord Henry the Sixth had only 457 subjects; and if any one will take the trouble to carry out the table, as F. P. has done at the other end of it, he will find that in the year 1250 poor Henry the Third had no more than one man and a fraction! The integer being probably the Earl of Pembroke, who was chosen Protector, and the fraction a poor weaver who could only earn two and sixpence a-week at weaving stuff for his Majesty's breeches.

I can make no better comment upon this curious circumstance than in F. P.'s own words.—“To those who cannot reason on general principles, as well as to those who have not been accustomed to reason upon general principles, *matters must be made plain practically, or they will never be understood at all, and it frequently happens that prejudices can be exposed in no other way than by pushing them to the absurd conclusion to which they lead.*”

These “conclusions,” according to F. P., if I understand him rightly, shew that “the great Creator does not send an adequate supply of every necessary of life;” and I say, they shew no such thing. It would be no very difficult task to make it appear that the *waste* land alone of Great Britain would, *under proper regulations*, support the whole present population. It would not enable us to pay sixty or seventy millions a-year in taxes, nor ten millions to the clergy, nor fifty thousand a-year to a Commander-in-Chief or a German Prince. I assume that no more should be taken from the fair earnings of industry than would be absolutely necessary for the unavoidable expenses of a well regulated representative government.

According to Lord Middleton's estimate, England, Scotland, and Wales contain 23 millions of acres of waste land; it would be bad management, indeed, if, after all abatements and deductions, these would not produce subsistence for 15 millions of persons: but it has been ascertained that an acre of ground, put in garden cultivation will regularly supply food for three persons. So that, allowing five millions of acres out of the 23 to be unproductive, there would still be sufficient for the support of 54 millions of people! But this is only the *waste* land; we have more than 70 millions of acres in all, in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, which, if we deduct ten millions as unproductive, would still yield subsistence for 180 millions of people! being more than ten times the present population.

“What!” exclaim my opponents, “would you have Privy Councillors, and Ladies of the Bedchamber, and Dignitaries of the Church, live upon turnips and cabbages?” No, there is no necessity for such temperance: but I would have the whole Privy Council, the Bench of Bishops, and the head of the Church to boot, so dieted, rather than one poor weaver should perish of hunger.

But is it not passing strange that this redundancy of population should never have been even dreamed of till within these few years? Till a redundancy of debt, and taxes, and luxury, and fanaticism, and machinery, rendered it necessary to throw out *a tub to the irritated whale*. It is not half a century since Goldsmith lamented that

“ There was a time, ere England’s griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintained its man.”

(which, by the bye, is four to an acre—making the United Kingdom capable of sustaining nearly 300 millions) and in another passage of the same poem he says,

“ Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.”

Now, without attaching any undue importance to the evidence of a poet, in this very unpoetical inquiry, it is plain from the manner in which he makes the observation, that it was a generally received opinion at that time that the population was decreasing. The Malthuseans contend that want of food is one of the grand checks to population; but will they dare to assert that food was not as plentiful amongst the working people in Goldsmith’s time, as it has been within the last five-and-twenty years? And if it was as plentiful, why did not population then increase upon the “*principle*” which they so sturdily maintain? To affirm that it *did*, would be to give up their famous doubling *ratio*, as may be seen by the edifying table of which F. P. has constructed *one end*, and I the other; to say that it *did not* would be to abandon their grand “*principle*,” so let them get out of it as they can.

If any of my readers are not convinced of the absurdity of this ratio of increase, viz. that population doubles itself, or has a tendency so to do every twenty-five years, let him attend for a moment to the following statement:—

Those who have made themselves acquainted with English history, *know*, as surely as any past event can be known, that this country had a large population when Julius Cæsar invaded it, 50 years before the Christian era. We will say there were then only one million of inhabitants, though there was unquestionably a much greater number. This million in the year *one* would be 4 millions; in the year 25, 8 millions; A. D. 50, 16 millions; A. D. 75, 32 millions; A. D. 100, 64 millions; and if we were to proceed, we should find that by the year 1825, there would have been more than could have found standing room upon the surface of the globe: Is it necessary to expose the absurdity further? Is it not better to trust to common sense and observation, than to listen to such unnatural and delusive theories?

I firmly believe what I have asserted—that redundant population is a piece of political *twattle*: I believe that Government

had sagacity enough to foresee that the profligate expenditure of the last reign would in the end produce terrible distress in this country ; and that they have exercised all their ingenuity to turn the attention of the people from the real causes of that distress, and to fix it upon some political *bugbear*. Tom Paine-burnings, volunteer-playing-at-soldiers, Bible Society speech-making, and other scenes of the farce are over ; population is now the raw-head-and-bloody-bones set up to frighten political babes from the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge. Believe it not, my countrymen ; bear your privations as well as you are able ; listen not to “ *lo here !*” or “ *lo there !*” but patiently and steadily watch the progress of events. I think the time is not very distant when the evils complained of will work their own cure ; and I hope to live to see the day when every really useful member of the community will be able to “ sit under his own vine and his own fig-tree, and have none to make him afraid.”

J. F.

Sept. 19.

“ THE AGE” NEWSPAPER.

I NOTICE “ The Age,” because it has noticed my “ Every Man’s Book ;” and because I feel obliged by the advertisement. I notice the abusive epithets and the impotent ravings of the editorial preface to the important extracts from my “ Every Man’s Book ;” because I know there is a man of the name of Mudie, on that paper, who was lately discarded from the office of the “ Morning Chronicle,” through the badness of his character, and who has made a ridiculous figure before the public as an “ Ass,” which died, and as a “ Dog,” which every one kicks with contempt. After Mudie has said all to the public that he can say of me, it is not unlikely that I may say, in turn, what I know of the late “ Ass” now “ Dog” Mudie. These are not names which I confer ; but names which Mudie has conferred on himself. I dislike nick names, they are always proof of the badness of the principle and argument of the individual who uses them. To tell a villain that he is a villain, a liar that he is a liar, or a thief that he is a thief, as I have truly told some men, with proofs, is but a moral blasphemy.

R. C.

TO MR. R. CARLILE.

SIR, Bristol, Sept. 1826.

I LATELY requested a friend of mine to send me a few of the books published by you, among which was *one* entitled, "Critical Remarks on the Truth and Harmony of the Four Gospels," &c. I was until the age of 45 years as orthodox as most men in this city, (so famed as the hot-bed of superstition and fanaticism;) I am now nearly 58, and the last 13 years of my life is all that I can say was spent in rational investigation. I am within the last 2 years arrived at Materialism, and am convinced that no man of strong mind, who is not afraid of his own thoughts, will stop satisfactorily at any intermediate stage. I had just finished a manuscript very similar to the above "Critical Remarks by a Free-thinker," when I accidentally saw on the cover of one of your publications the advertisement for this, and finding it so similar to my own in title, induced me to send for it. The reading of it convinced me, that it was *better* than my own, and will save me the trouble and expense of *attempting* to publish it; more especially, as my education is not calculated for such things, and there is difficulty in getting a printer in this city to accomplish it.

My object in sending this epistle is to request you will send me as many of the books above alluded to as the inclosed 20s. note will pay for, after deducting the expense of postage—that I may present them to a few of my orthodox friends. I consider it one of the most useful works for that purpose that I have met with; it is a calm and dispassionate work, that will not allow the opponent to retort the charge of abuse, and it meets them on their own ground. *Your* works are like St. Paul's "strong meats;" you are the Goliath, the Champion, and the "Babes of Grace" require a little previous milk before they can swallow your preparations. They are afraid of them, and their spiritual guides take care to increase their fears.

I have often heard from the pulpit, repeated in prayers, "thy tender mercy and providential care extends to every living creature that breathes." I lately asked one of the liberals of this class, if he thought this assertion true; he answered, yes. I then asked him, "How comes it that Christianity, which they perpetually represent as the 'best of all God's *gifts* to the children of men,' should be for 18 centuries withheld from 9-10ths of the human race, and only *given* to a few of the 1-10th, as a valuable means of *income*, which the many of the 1-10th must perpetually pay for? This, a curious gift to the children of men! At best, it is only a gift to a few priests, who alone could duly appreciate the value and meaning of that precept of their Master, 'care not

for the morrow, sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.' It is truly applicable to them; but to no other class of men can it be applied." To this query, I could get no tangible answer, but that "not a sparrow falls to the ground without our heavenly Father's notice."—"Well, then," I asked, "of what advantage is it to a flock of sparrows to be noticed when they are shot?" "It is an allegory," said he. "Very well," said I, "then where is the analogy?"—"It alludes to his care of man." Then I replied, "I deny the truth of the analogy; for the starving manufacturers of our counties, the cruelties of inquisitors, the sufferings of infants and idiots, the incurable diseases of nature, and the great mass of wretchedness, so evident to our senses, the encouragement afforded to villany and chicane, tyranny and oppression, all demonstrate the fallacy of the assertion; for man perpetually suffers more than any sparrows ever could or did." Here we closed, and here I close,

And remain your sincere well-wisher,

F. G. B.

P. S. *Query*.—How many parsons would be found to preach, if no salary was annexed to the office?

Why do the Quakers, who sit in silence to be taught of God, suffer a few in the "uppermost seat of the synagogue," to disturb God's teaching?

Can any one of them give us any tangible evidence of any communication of God to man?

TO MR. CARLILE.

DEAR SIR,

Richmond, Sept. 12, 1826.

ON the 27th August last, I had the luck to see the boy mentioned at page 557, vol. 8, of 'The Republican,' that was said to have his father's name written on the iris of his eyes. He is a cripple, and is carried about the country for the purpose, I suppose, of making money by shewing him as a curiosity, though the man that attends him says it is for the benefit of his health, and by the advice of two physicians. I had a good opportunity of examining his eyes minutely with a magnifying glass. The iris of each eye is beautiful'y variegated and waved, but to make out "John Wood" in one eye, and "1817" in the other, requires a much more lively imagination than I possess.

The man that carries him from house to house, shews a printed paper, in which is set forth the marvellous circumstance related by Allen M'Fayden. You know how readily ignorant people are

made to believe any thing of a wonderful nature that is pointed out to them; but I am sure that an unprejudiced person can see no letters that will form the words said to be engraven on his eyes.

I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

C. B.

THE ARTICLES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

PARAPHRASED,

For the Benefit of those Clergymen who swear to them, without having ever read them. Dedicated, without permission, to R. R. Taylor and Irving.

THAT three are one and one is three,
I hold a sacred verity:
That Jesus Christ went down to Hell
But what for, the devil must tell.
And then he winged his way above
To join the Father and the Dove.
That Mary, *veneranda Mater*,
Gave being to her own Creator.
Married, but neither wife nor maid,
As by no nat'ral impulse swayed,
Her husband Joe for very shame sake
Acting just like his sheepish namesake.
We've no free will that we can trust to;
But *die* for doing what we must do.
Good works like rags are of no use,
But our Damnation will produce.
But if we've faith and shew docility,
God will reward our gullibility.
I do believe the Creeds, and thence
Conclude all damned who've common sense;
That ev'ry knave and ev'ry doxy
In Eve and Adam sinned by proxy;
What time the serpent chose to cram 'em
With golden pippins stol'n (God damn him !)
And that all infants for their sin,
Who die without a christening,
Are justly doomed, as Parsons tell,
To creep and crawl like toads in hell !
The Ancient Testament is true
Though so contrary to the New.
All this is from inspired pen:
Let ev'ry Jackass bray AMEN.

Note.—We print the above, because it was brought to us by one of the Rev. Mr. Taylor's Christian opponents !

STATE OF RELIGION IN ENGLAND.

RELIGION is now correctly defined to be an attachment and submission to phantoms of the imagination; a passion of the ill-educated mind that creates for itself a tyrant. It prevails most where ignorance most prevails. It falls before sound education, and is chased out of existence where an enlarged enquiry into the qualities of the things about us takes place. The religious mind is also correctly defined to be a diseased mind. Religion operates most powerfully on minds that are admittedly diseased. Our lunatic asylums are not without chaplains, and the lunatics of Lancaster are said to observe a moderation of their lunacy on the seventh or Sabbath day! A close similarity is visible between religion and every species of insanity. In some, religion is a mild, melancholy, moping insanity. In others, it becomes furious. It assumes all the characteristics of insanity, from raging madness to mild and harmless melancholy.

The inference to be drawn from this preface is, that as the amount of religion has been lessened, so the amount of insanity has been lessened, in this country.

The Roman Catholic religion having been solely the performance of the priests, in which they were actors, substitutes, and agents, the laity holding only a passive connection, with the mind ever at ease after a confession, insanity was not generated; because, in fact, religion did not exist among them. It was reserved for the circulation of the Bible, for the Protestant Reformation, for dissent from the Established Church, for the existence of a multitude of sects, to produce that religious fanaticism which for two centuries has made England a nation of mad men and mad women. Nothing was heard about lunatic asylums in England during the predominance of the Roman Catholic religion. I doubt if there be any lunatic asylums in Spain, Portugal, or Italy, or any thing beyond idiots from birth wherewith to fill them. If mind be the soul of the rational man, what is the soul of an idiot. If religion be aught but insanity, why are infidels found to be sensible men, or sensible men found to be infidels?

The Priests of the Roman Catholic religion were preservatives against insanity; for they were the performers of religious ceremonies; they absolved sins, dispensed faith, and atoned for wrong doing; so that the laity had no cause for trouble and mental anxiety. To be on good terms with the priest was the sure passport to Heaven. And as to insanity among the priests, it was out of the question. They performed, they were actors, and were not bound to be in reality the persons whom they personated. Belief was not the criterion of religion or sound doc-

trine; they believed nothing of that which they preached; they valued no religious doctrine for private and individual use. It was when religion became allied to mental sincerity, that insanity grew up with it, as sure as weeds grew out of neglected or polluted soils. See a man insane on the subject of religion, and you may be sure of his religious sincerity. Religion has preyed upon his mind, has entered deep into his system, has agitated every nerve, has poisoned the contents of every vein, has polluted his whole system of fluids, has changed their regular action, has made him *mad*. In short, there is no proof of sincerity in religious pretensions; but where it produces decisive marks of insanity. All below insanity is the hollow form of custom that is visible in the external motions of the body; but that reaches not the mind. It is a proof of the hypocrisy that professes that which it does not feel.

Dissent from the Established Religion, the right of private judgment in matters of opinion, may be dated back three centuries in this country. It has been a question with some philosophers, whether this dissent, this right of private judgment in matters of religion, has done any good. The objection has not so much been made to the right of private judgment, as to its effects in matters of religion, where philosophical enquiry was not presented to the mind. The objection, in reality, has been to the insanity to which that judgment led, unaided by the rule of reason, and free, fair, and extensive enquiry. One of them, lately writing to me, says, "You will see that I have preferred the Catholic to the reformed superstition. It is better, as it is less aristocratical and proud. The Reformation was an evil, as it put off the day of Common Sense, by a beggarly endeavour to blend religion and reason. I am convinced of the superiority of *Popery* to *Church of Englandism*!" I understand this choice of Popery to be the choice of the least of two evils, and not an inference, that something under the name of religion is necessary. Dissent from an established religion is an assertion of the right of private judgment; but, in matters of religion, that private judgment produces all sorts of evils, until it comes to the conclusion, that religion is wholly an evil. In the course of writing this paragraph, I take up the "*Morning Herald*," and read the following article, which is one of a hundred daily proofs, that sincere religious feeling and insanity are inseparable:—

"BRIGHTON.—A melancholy instance of religious fanaticism occurred here on Monday. A lady of the name of B——, who is residing at a boarding house, left her home in the middle of the day, and was absent until eight o'clock, when, after a lapse of about six hours, she was discovered on the race-hill, in the midst of the rain, which poured in torrents. It appears that she had prevailed upon a man whom she met to accompany her to the Downs, where she made him kneel at her side, and both continued praying and occupied in other religious exercises, till she was

found as above described. How the man was induced, unless by the hope of pecuniary reward, to humour her fancy, and remain exposed to the drenching showers for so long a period remains undiscovered. She took it into her bewildered imagination that he was JESUS CHRIST, and did him homage as such, and was also guilty of many other extravagances. When at length found by some people who were passing that way, and who were attracted to the spot by the singularity of her situation, her draggled clothes, and drenched person, rendered her a melancholy object. She was humanely taken to her residence, and every care was bestowed that her distressing situation seemed to require.

Miss B—— is a maiden lady, has moved in a very respectable sphere, visiting many of the principal families at Brighton. Her conduct, though occasionally eccentric, never until now betokened any symptom of derangement; and it appears in the present case to have proceeded from religious feeling acting upon a diseased imagination. She has lately attended a place of worship, where the exhortations of the preacher have had a powerful effect on her mind; and which not being under proper regulation, has led to the freak we have described."

The late and present progress of infidelity is one of the greatest blessings that could have fallen on the country. Without it, we should have been a nation of mad fanatics. The methodists were carrying all before them; and even now, they are in a condition to dictate terms of union with the church, which several churchmen seem eager to embrace. Attacked as the sects have been by that common and general opponent infidelity, much mischief has been prevented; for instead of each running to the extreme of fanaticism on the ground to which its tenets lead, each has looked round to see on what points a union can be made with the rest: and in every case a disposition for union is the necessary preliminary point to be settled. But for infidelity, there would have been no disposition among the sects to unite, no Bible Societies, no Society for the promotion of Christian Knowledge. All sects are afraid of the infidels. We have societies for the conversion of Jews, and of every other sect that is not Christian; but we hear nothing of a society for the conversion of infidels, who would gladly reason the matter and be converted with and by any persons who will meet them, and who invite conversion where it can be made by argument and demonstration. It is not fair, on the part of the Christians, that they should seek to enforce a conversion where it is not desired, and shrink from it where it is desired, and where there is a probability of its being made reciprocal.

It is the progress of infidelity toward religion that has been the grand stimulus to scientific improvements in this country, that has extended its commerce and awakened its inventive faculties. I was the same in France. We see nothing of the kind in Spain, Portugal, Italy and Austria. Religion is there the opiate to improvement. Even the clashing, the madness of dissenting sects has elicited genius. And genius, though it be an evil one,

is preferable to the stupor of the animal that is not inquisitive. It was genius, though a bad one, that produced "Paradise Lost;" but Milton, as one of an established church, where there were no dissent, had never written such a work.

That religion has no alliance with talent, we have daily proofs. The present Bishop of Chester passes for a learned man, for a man of some ability; but let us examine his religious doctrines. By a report in the Bolton Chronicle, it appears, he lately preached at Dean Church, about a mile from Bolton, on the occasion of opening a new organ, and nothing can be more atrocious than his insults to the distressed people of that neighbourhood. The Bishop's text was from 1 Gen. Epist. Peter, iii. chapter and 12th verse.—"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open for their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." The following is a sketch of the sermon as reported in the Chronicle:—

"The Bishop, in the course of a powerful discourse, of which we can give but a mere outline, observed, that as the congregation had received an additional aid to their devotions, a circumstance that had attracted multitudes from the surrounding neighbourhood, it would not be impertinent to say something concerning the profitableness of religion, and the rewards held out to all faithful believers. The text taught man to be assured that God watches over the elect with careful vigilance. He then alluded to their temporal eternal welfare.—That God is every where present, is admitted by all *who admit his existence, and with such only we have to do.* His eyes are as much open to the conduct of the ungodly, as they are to that of his chosen servants. *And, looking generally at the present world, we find the righteous to be blessed, and that upon the whole, the moral and religious part of the community meet with prosperity in life.* They are at all events happier than the wicked, and experience a smoother passage through the present state of trial. It is to the future, however, that we are to look for true happiness. When men see the righteous suffer, and the wicked prosperous, they are apt to think it strange; but where one wicked man is prosperous in his temporal concerns, one hundred are unsuccessful, and even the apparently prosperous are truly miserable, when you can penetrate the real state of their feelings. *Wherever poverty is found, there are the wicked, who have brought on misfortunes by their own imprudence.* See how many have been brought to this state by gambling, drunkenness, and the most odious vices. Misfortunes generally arise from the want of settled principles, and nothing so much contributes to give decision of character as Christian principles. The wicked usually fall before the first blast of adversity, and with them their character in the eyes of the world falls; and seldom it is that such men retrieve themselves, and be restored to society. When adversity overtakes the good man, he has many resources with which to console himself, and to recover his lost ground. He has a firm reliance upon his Saviour, and he knows he shall not be cast away. His well known principles secure him the esteem of all godly men, who hasten to comfort him in his affliction; and where they see a prospect of being of service to him, assist him in his temporal necessities.—We find marks of God's particular providence in the world. Ask the righteous whether they do not remember many instances of the interposition of Divine providence on their behalf—almost miraculous preservation

from impending danger—friends in need.—*Was it not God who put it into the hearts of persons enjoying power and wealth, to relieve the distresses existing in the manufacturing districts? Would this have been done, had not the Christian principles existing amongst them through schools and other institutions, caused them to be meek and patient under their late sufferings? Will not these afflictions be sanctified, and cause them to put their trust in providence? Ask amongst our poorer brethren, whether in the distress with which they have been surrounded, those who have been the most contented, are not those who have been most diligent in attending the means of grace; and the most miserable, and the least able to bear adversity, those who have led dissolute lives?—Christianity takes away the danger of prosperity, and the sting of adversity. The wicked can have no comfort without it. However they may be absorbed with the cares, the pleasures, or the vanities of the world, dreadful thoughts of death and eternity, will sometimes steal upon them; whereas the Christian is consoled let whatever may befall him. Though the righteous are generally more prosperous in temporal concerns than the wicked, yet there are many who undergo severe afflictions. The Martyrs of the Primitive Church for instance; and Lazarus, we are told was poor to his death. But such characters enjoy a serenity of mind, which is worth all the honours and emoluments that the world could give them.*

We have only the authority of the reporter for the accuracy of these heads; but though such a reporter may err on points, he is generally accurate upon the whole. The Bishop tells all the distressed people of Lancashire, and indeed of all the country, that their poverty arises from their wickedness, their misfortunes from their imprudence!

I support the doctrine, that where all start fair in the race of life, misfortune generally arises from misconduct; but here there is an exception; here the labourers of Lancashire do not start fair with the Bishop. The Bishop taxes the produce of their labour, and labours not in turn to a reciprocal advantage. They, therefore, may accurately trace a portion of their distress to the maintenance of such an official character, rather than to their own wickedness and imprudence. Or, if the Bishop will insist upon wickedness and imprudence, it is clear, that it consists, to a certain degree, in the support and countenance which those distressed labourers give to him.

At the beginning of his sermon, he tells us, that the poor wickedly and imprudently bring their poverty and distress on themselves. At the conclusion, that *such characters enjoy a serenity of mind, which is worth all the honours and emoluments that the world could give them.* If the Bishop really thinks what he has preached, what more easy for him to do, than to renounce his honours and emoluments, and to place himself among the poor, distressed cotton-weavers and spinners of his diocese?

The Bishop says, that it was God who put it into Christian hearts to relieve the distresses of the people of that neighbourhood. But who caused that distress? The wickedness and imprudence of the people? Why did not the same God foresee

and frustrate that wickedness, that imprudence and that consequent distress? What is his providence worth, if he allow pain to accumulate just for the pleasure of lessening it? The Bishop says, he has nothing to do with those who do not admit the existence of a god, omnipresent and with eyes. He ought to have something to do with such persons. He ought to preach to them in preference to all others: to question them and to be questioned by them, until he either prove or disprove the existence of such a god. With reference to the dogmas of theologians, I so far deny the existence of their god, as to say, that they give us no proof of it. If instead of preaching menaces to distressed people, and telling them that their distresses were consequent on their vices, how much more honest would it have been in the Bishop, to have taken my "EVERY MAN'S BOOK," and "EVERY WOMAN'S BOOK," to shew these persons that the existence of an intelligent provident power, beyond themselves, was yet a question, and hardly a question on the negative side, and that the sum total of the remedy for their improvement was a political principle which entirely depends on themselves. The distressed labourers of this country must not look to any leaders, or legislators, or ministers, to amend their condition, they must act politically for themselves: they must denounce and remove whatever improperly taxes their labour; and when they do this, they will have no Bishop of Chester to preach nonsense and contradictions to them.

It is always worth a trifle to have the sayings and doings of these highly official men recorded, for it is always easy to refute their doctrinal points, where they step out of morals or mix up religion with their moral precepts. I could make almost every sentence of the Bishop's here recorded a text for a sermon, not to support but to refute it: but enough is done to shew an instance that good sense can no where be put in union with religious doctrines or with the common theory of a god.

The foregoing may be considered a specimen of the state of the preaching of religion in the Established Church of this country. During one of the ceremonies in the parish-church of Bolton, a woman laughed at something that the Bishop said; and made him very angry. He threatened to put a stop to the proceedings, if he saw another smile, or any improper behaviour, and talked of putting the woman out of the church!

The dissenting preachers fill their chapels, which is all that they can do: and the Rev. Mr. Taylor fills his, and preached last Sunday one of the finest moral and oratorical discourses that ever came from a pulpit. We want more of such preachers; for there is not a question but a thousand of them would fill as many chapels. It is worthy of remark, that there is less of the savage nature visible among religious people, it seldom breaks out into fury, now that infidelity is making such rapid strides among

them. They have given up the offensive to assume the defensive, and with the loss of all hope of putting infidelity down, combatant like, they are content to keep it off from themselves as long as possible.

"John Bull," who writes "for God, the King, and the People," meaning, of course, the God of Mount Sinai, and not of Mount Olympus,* refused to insert my advertisement of "Every Man's Book, or, What is God?" In this case, "John" behaved as if it were a matter of certainty, that his God is well known and an unquestionable character. "John" often boasts of what he dares to do, and he boasts of it in the very paper in which my advertisement should have been; but he dares not to be honest in his dealings with me. He can attack Bible Societies and dissenting fanaticism, with argument; but he bellows only at infidelity. He talks about writing "for God;" but he fears to ask himself and others, *What is God?* what is the word, or thing, or phantom, for which he writes?

Another unequivocal sign of the decay of religion or insanity, and of the growth of sanity, is seen in the circumstance, that Christians are no longer horrified at the idea of infidelity. They now look upon it as a matter of course thing, and even admit that infidels may be moral. This disposition has arisen upon the abatement of persecution. It is the sanity that arises, as the insanity of religion recedes. Much has been done to improve the state of the people of this country on matters of religion, in shewing them its errors, its vices, its insanity; but much remains to be done. Enough is printed; but all do not read what is printed. The great object to be accomplished is that we instruct each other, and attack religion or error, vice and insanity, wherever we find it.

R. C.

* Formerly the Gods were supported by the sword: "God and my Country" was the warrior's cry: now, since the pen has become the universal weapon, "John Bull," seeing the people more easily deluded than instructed, takes up the pen for god! A god that needs such an instrument as a goose-quill must be something below the goose. The goose is the more important animal, and "John Bull," though he can wield a goose quill, had better confess, that the gods are supported to keep men on a footing with geese. The goose has not, to my knowledge, been yet an object of worship, and as variety is the order in theology, an Englishman may as well take a goose for his god. God will then be visible. We may as well have a god of our own, an English God, as to go to Mount Sinai for one. The mere lack of a high mountain should not deprive us of a god. The Welch God may reside on Mount Snowdon. The English God, to be central, may be placed on some of the Derbyshire Mountains, though not too near to that vulgarly called place "Devil's (*naughty word!*) a peak!" And the Scotch theirs where they please. But then, those gods are quarrelsome, jealous fellows, and have constantly kept nations and tribes at war for superiority, to the great degradation and inferiority of the real combatants. So, upon the whole, it will be better to have none: neither the Jewish God of Mount Sinai, the goose, nor any other. Let fools keep gods: wise men can live better and happier without them.

NEW BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY.

UPON the plan of publishing in numbers, or at three-pence per-sheet and one shilling in parts of four sheets, I am about to commence the publication of a work under the following title:—
“A Dictionary of modern Anti-superstitionists; or, an account, arranged alphabetically, of those, who, whether called Atheists, Sceptics, Deists, Latitudinarians, or Religious Reformers, &c., have, during the last ten centuries, contributed toward the diminution of superstition.”

A hundred times during the last seven years, I have been asked, if I could not get a compilation of the lives of Deists or infidel Authors. My answer has invariably been:—“*it will be done by and bye,*” It is now about to be done and upon an extensive scale. It is impossible to say to what number of volumes the work will be carried, as almost every good writer has been a writer against superstition; and here will be no fearful suppression of what any author has usefully and boldly written.

The author of this new biographical dictionary is so far well adapted for the work, as to add to a fondness for biographical reading and writing the necessary knowledge of languages to compile from originals and to make a purely original compilation. Where quotations are made, they will be frankly acknowledged. He does it too for pleasure and not for profit, sparing no expence for the perfection of his work, in the collection of books, and what is more, in typographical accuracy.

Several eminent men have volunteered their assistance for the advancement and improvement of this work, and I hope that it will be found a complete history of the progress of right thinking.

It will have the advantage over other biographical dictionaries inasmuch as it will be got up as a matter of principle and as a matter of maintenance of the right of free publication of opinion, and not merely to make a book to sell, which when a sale is established is spun out to an unpardonable length with useless and even objectionable matter. This Dictionary will be as brief as copious information will allow it to be. The common Encyclopedias and Biographical Dictionaries are works planned by Booksellers for sale and not by authors for merit and distinction.

Such a work is necessarily published in numbers to cheapen the means of procuring it: but our ideas of profit on it are prospective and we wait for the establishment of its character to give it an extensive circulation as a completed work.

No set time is appointed either for the appearance of the numbers, or the completion of the work. As it is compiled for

pleasure and not a task to be paid for, the compiler will pursue it with as much earnestness as pleasure will promote, or as will promote pleasure. The numbers will be published occasionally, something near to one every week.

The subscribers may rely upon perseverance, as the publisher holds it to be a breach of faith with the public not to complete a work where the completion is practicable.

R. C.

LONDON BURYING GROUNDS.

AMONG the many improvements which of late years have been made in the metropolis, it is surprising that nothing has been done in respect to burying grounds. Streets have been widened, new and strict regulations have been made for removing all filth, and vast expenses have been incurred to supply the inhabitants with wholesome water: this and much more has been done to improve the healthiness of this great city, and yet thousands of dead bodies are allowed to be heaped together, in thickly inhabited neighbourhoods, where they necessarily contaminate all the surrounding atmosphere with their noxious exhalations. Dead bodies ought to be disposed of so as not to injure the living; but in London they are allowed to poison the air we breathe.

It surprises me that the inhabitants who live near some of those foul laboratories, do not indict them as nuisances, nor endeavour to bring them before the notice of the Legislature. The removal of many minor nuisances has been loudly called for. The greater portion must be unaware of the evil produced; and those who feel it sensibly, must consider it unavoidable. We cannot otherwise account for their apathy. It is my object to show that the evil exists; and that it can be removed. I shall do this in a few words as the subject cannot be generally interesting to the readers of "The Republican."

In the most commodious burying grounds of the metropolis, the number of bodies interred is so great, that the surface of the ground, being so continually broken, has scarcely any sign of vegetation. Judging from this, the bodies must lie very thick in the ground, which being light, allows a free passage to the foul air. These burying grounds are mostly surrounded with very thickly inhabited neighbour-

hoods. Several hundred windows may be seen opening into one churchyard; and through these windows it is evident that the inhabitants must be inhaling the foul air from the decomposing bodies.

It is vain to suppose that the earth absorbs all the noxious effluvia. In churchyards where the same earth is not moved twice in twenty years, and where, consequently, being less impregnated with the decomposed animal matter, it absorbs the most freely, there are evident signs that the foul air reaches the surface: the vegetation becomes gross on the top of a grave, such as it would if the surface were richly manured; and, of course, when the foul air reaches thus far, some of it ascends to the atmosphere. In the London burying grounds, where the bodies are so numerous, the earth so light, and as I should suppose fully saturated, nearly all the foul air must reach the atmosphere. If the bodies were allowed to remain exposed on the surface of such places, the inhabitants of the neighbourhood would directly imagine that they were in danger of being poisoned; but because a little loose earth intervenes, they suppose that no bad consequences can arise.

So much for what may be styled *visible* burying grounds, and I proceed to those that are *invisible* or hidden. If the former be nuisances, the latter are ten times more so.

When I was first told that in London dead bodies were buried in cellars, that coffins were piled away like so many boxes of soap, my credibility was put to a severe trial, and I concluded that if the information were correct as to burying in covered ground, it must be greatly exaggerated as to the number of bodies and the method of disposing of them. I could not believe that such a nuisance would be permitted; or even if the nuisance were permitted, the idea of burying in such a manner appeared to me so disgusting that no person would adopt it. The fact will show that I was deceived, that Londoners are not so particular about the purity of their atmosphere, nor so nice about the disposal of their departed friends, as I supposed them.

One instance must serve my purpose. I am not much acquainted with London, but I am told by persons who know it well, that such as I am about to describe may be found in almost every close neighbourhood in the city and its environs.

In one corner of Clement's Inn stands Ænon Chapel, and *beneath* it is a burying ground. This ground I have visited and examined. It is a cellar about twenty yards long and

ten wide. The arching of the common shore runs through it and occupies a considerable space. Nevertheless, in this small compass, and in the short period of between three and four years, *upwards of eighteen hundred and thirty bodies* have been deposited! It is almost incredible, but those who are, like Thomas of old, hard of belief, may, as I have done, satisfy themselves by an examination. I received the information concerning the number of burials, mediately through a friend, from the sexton himself.

The method of burial, or packing away, is this:—A beginning is made at one end by piling one coffin upon another till there is just room to creep along between the upper one and the floor of the chapel; then another pile is made, and so on throughout the cellar, always leaving a pile open to view. A little loose earth, at most, not a foot in depth, covers the top. How long the bodies take in decomposing I know not; I asked the sexton, and his reply was: "Oh not long, they lie mighty warm here so many together;" meaning, I suppose, that the great number of bodies brought together is the cause of hastening putrefaction and ultimate decomposition.

Now this infernal laboratory stands in a very thickly inhabited neighbourhood. The only opening to it is through two narrow passages leading out of St. Clement's-lane: the steps leading down to the cellar are within a few yards of inhabited rooms; in short, the whole chapel, excepting the side which faces Clement's Inn, and which is a dead wall, is closely surrounded by very lofty houses. Let any one, then, consider what must be the effect upon the atmosphere of such a neighbourhood. But a pound of animal matter left to putrefy will effect very sensibly the atmosphere of a whole house. I have known a dead rat beneath a floor to make a room uninhabitable. Just imagine, then, the quantity of foul air which so many bodies, in a state of putrefaction must generate. I have been assured that, during the summer months, the stench has sometimes been almost unbearable. Complaints having been made by the neighbours, the owner attempted a remedy by making an opening through the chapel, but this only lets the foul air to the upper rooms of the adjoining houses instead of the lower.

Why is not the whole place indicted as a nuisance? The neighbours perhaps are too poor; but those who are capable, and have any regard for the purity of the London atmosphere, ought to take the thing in hand. The owner has risen to his present eminent station, possessor of a chapel and leader of a sect, from very small beginnings. Tired I suppose of hard work, he adopted the never-failing, the gulling trade. He first drew together a few persons in a room; and, as a natural consequence in these gull-

catching times, was soon enabled to erect a chapel. Not content to live by the living, by the dupes who attend his stupid and unmeaning discourses, he must have a picking from the dead. The love of *pelf* in the case, would not have been so glaring, had he confined the burials to those of his own congregation; but as his cellar is the receptacle of any whose friends have twenty shillings to spare, his object is evident. His chapel and cellar are to him a fortune; and if he supply some of the dissecting rooms,—for which by-the-bye I should be inclined to excuse him in consideration of its utility,—he must be, as the Londoners say, “making a pretty thing of it.”

It is hard to blame a man for getting the most he can, either by the living or dead; and in fact whenever I find the world so bad that I cannot get a livelihood honestly, I shall adopt the gulling business myself; but I do blame the Londoners generally for allowing such nuisances to exist. Every voice ought to be heard calling upon the legislature to remove them; petition upon petition ought to be laid before our Houses of Parliament, demanding an examination into the case.

The principal object should be to remove the dead bodies far from the habitations of the living. This may be effected at less expense than attends the present burials. From what I can learn of the charges for entering a corpse in London, the average may be taken at about twenty shillings. Now land may be purchased for burying grounds, at from six to ten miles from the city, and the bodies be removed thither at a considerably less expense.

An acre of land would receive, allowing about twenty feet of surface for each, 2,000 bodies. 20,000 is above the annual deaths in London. Taking this number, and allowing that ground once buried in should not be disturbed in less than ten years, London would require burying grounds to the extent of 100 acres. Suppose we take the rent as high as £10 an acre yearly, the cost of ground for each burial would be, instead of twenty shillings as at present, only two shillings. Allowing two more for the grave digger there remain sixteen shillings to defray the expenses of removing each body. If each parish, or as many as may be found sufficient, kept a proper carriage, all the dead of the metropolis may be removed ten miles from town for less than half sixteen shillings.

This is not a matter to be effected by private individuals, but the legislature may do it easily. The land could be purchased a few miles from the city, in different directions, ten or twenty acres in a place as may be thought proper. All that is wanting is that the legislature should pass an act to forbid burials within a certain distance, and to provide a place for them elsewhere. Thus the city may be rid of a great nuisance, and far more respectable and decent burying grounds may be obtained, without

any additional expense; and with economy, considerable sums may be saved,

It is hoped that these lines will meet the eye of some one fully competent and inclined to lay the matter before the parliament. The acquiescence of a vast majority of the inhabitants of the metropolis may be depended upon. Such men as the owner of Ænon Chapel may object to such a measure; because they may suppose that although they would have a purer air to breathe, they would fall short of their accustomed income; but no rational and disinterested man could object to any plan for purifying the atmosphere he lives in, especially when it can be done without any extra demand on his purse.

R. H.

EXTRACTS

From "The Australian" New South Wales Paper.

"ONE hundred and seventy-five thousand acres of land on this side the mountains are to be measured forthwith, and appropriated as a glebe to the Australian Church. This quantity is independent of the immense grant, for the like use, over the mountains. Five hundred thousand acres also, at Van Diemen's Land, are destined to become the property of the Church. These are no despicable endowments and are likely to have no despicable influence on the fate of the two colonies. Until the Church be put in possession of this land, by admeasurement, &c., the business of the settler must stand still. He can obtain no order for land, can see no prospect of applying his time or his industry to any profit. It is making him, at all events, pay in advance, by his temporal losses here, for his spiritual comfort hereafter. One-third of the land granted to the Church may be sold, and another third mortgaged for the improvement of the remaining third, and for other purposes. The Archdeacon's salary is a mere trifle, only TWO THOUSAND A YEAR, with liberty to appoint a Curate, and return to England, in the enjoyment of the full salary, minus the Curate's stipend—some eighty pounds a-year, we suppose.

"An order was made by Sir Thomas Brisbane, previous to his departure, for the appropriation of twenty thousand acres of land to the use of the Wesleyan Missionaries who

are employed in the conversion of the aboriginal natives of this country."

This is a very pretty beginning with the Australian Church: the CHURCH OF THIEVES! We shall have Christianity flourishing and the Church rich among the thieves, when the property of the Church at home will be sold to pay its debt,—for the national debt was in a great measure incurred to support the Church,—and Christianity extinct.

The Wesleyans too have been incorporated for the purpose of Christianizing the natives of New South Wales! As well may they attempt to Christianize the Kangaroos, for what good they will do. Here, take a specimen of the Christianizing of the negroes in the West Indies from "John Bull" of last Sunday. The following is the speech of a preaching Christian negro over the grave of another negro:—

"Dea belubb'd, we gather together dis face congregation, because it horrible among all men not to take delight in hand for wantonness lust and appetite like brute mule dat hab no understanding. When de man cut down like guinea grass, he worship no more any body, but gib all him world's good to de debbil, and Gara Mighty (God Almighty) tell him soul must come up into heab'n where no'ting but glorio. What de use me fight wid beast in Fecus (Ephesus). Rise up all and eat and drink, because we die yesterday—no so to-morrow who shew you mystery—who nebbe sleep—but twinkle him eye till the trumpet peak? who baptize you and gib you victory ober de debbil's flesh, Old Adam belubbed—he bury when a child and de new man rise up when old. Breren you see that dam rascal Dollar, he no Jew, no Missionary, no Turk for true, you see him lugh (Abdallah denied it) when he go to hell he die and nebbagnash him teeth and worms can't nyam (eat) him. Breren all christians, white and black man all one colour, Sambo and Mulatto, no man bigger dan anoder, no massa, and no fum, fum, plenty o' grog—so breren Gara Mighty take the dead man and good night."

62, FLEET STREET.

THOUGH not yet quit of the carpenter and painter, I have gotten this place into something like order for business. A compact printing office has been made and the house embraces all the conveniences for which I can express a wish. The shop is handsome and commodious. A statue of Paine is raised at the back of it, with an elegantly formed female figure, as an emblem of truth, holding a light to him.

The property of the Joint Stock Book Company is arranged in its department and may be seen by any subscriber or any respectable person. The company is fairly established in a small way and we may now boldly call upon those to join it who have made promises, or who have silently thought of doing it.

My engagement to visit country friends must be suspended. Whether I shall be able to do it in October, I cannot yet say; but I trust that there is not one of them, who would wish me to cripple this new establishment by leaving it at such a moment. I have now a valuable property in it; and though that property is in part encumbered with a mortgage, and though I may in reducing that mortgage feel some pecuniary difficulties, for a year or more to come, I have not a doubt of ultimate success. Fair dealing is the maxim upon which I have opened the establishment, and all I want is *time* to turn every thing to advantage. The coming in and fitting up will exhaust the sum of twelve hundred pounds. This to me was a large sum. I have met with all necessary assistance so far, and trust that I shall still be able to find friends who will assist me by relieving each other. Interest of five per cent for all monies lent has been and will be paid until the principal be paid. What I particularly wish, is subscribers to the Joint Stock Book Company, to keep the printing office in rapid motion.

R. C.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The letter to Mr. Peel by Philalethes would, probably, answer every legal purpose that it could answer in print, if the MS. were sent to Mr. Peel. Any expression in justification of the offence is intolerable with relation to the social claim of females, and morally imprudent with relation to better disposed males. A change of the law is essential to a diminution of the offence. It has been so practically proved in Holland. If it please Philalethes, the MS. shall be forwarded to Mr. Peel's office.

Freret's Letter from Thrasybulus to Leucippe is on sale at 3s.

The Aphorisms of Paine will be ready in another fortnight.

We are proceeding also with a pocket edition of Palmer's Principles of Nature, and with an octavo edition of Volney's Ruins.

A friend writes thus from a village in Sussex—
 "The times are changed. In this very village, where Tom Paine used to be burnt in effigy, we have infidel carpenters, atheistical farmers, unbelieving day-labourers and some common husbandmen, who would dumbfound the stoutest parson that ever filled the pulpit. My friend, Shelley, the atheist, used to say, that 'when men ceased to believe in a god of vengeance, they would not hang and guillotine one another for stealing forty shillings.'"

Yes, "the times are changed, and changed for the better." In London, we have the press free, we have a shop, in a first-rate thoroughfare, filled with deistical and atheistical books, unmolested: and we have some of the finest specimens of oratory at the Founder's Hall Chapel, in the Sunday moral and deistical discourses of the Reverend Robert Taylor.

R. C.